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ABSTRACT

Designed to help community college leaders plan for the programs and services that will be needed to serve students in the future, this report describes findings and recommendations developed by nearly 600 California community college practitioners participating in seminars and forums sponsored by the Community College League of California's Commission on the Future. Findings related to likely future conditions and recommendations for responding to these conditions are presented for student enrollment patterns, student demographics, educational preparedness, curriculum demands, teaching and learning styles, and student financial resource needs. Highlighted findings and recommendations include the following: (1) colleges should prepare now to respond to increasing cultural diversity, changing values, and a widening spectrum of student learning skills; (2) students in the future will be less involved in their higher education and more involved in supporting their families; (3) technology will have a dramatic impact on instruction and student learning and the role of faculty will change dramatically; (4) colleges should devote more resources to staff development, including upgrading faculty's technology competencies and all staff's multi-cultural sensitivities; and (5) colleges must respond to the increasing cost of education by promoting more partnerships in the community to provide support for student financial aid and capital outlay projects. Appendixes include a list of Commission members and contributing districts, suggested topics for holding campus forums on the future, and a briefing from a Commission meeting. (TGI)

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Preparing to Serve the STUDENT of the FUTURE

A Planning Resource Report

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Preparing to Serve the STUDENT of the FUTURE

A Planning Resource Report

from the

Community College League of California
Commission on the Future

April 1996

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Preparing to Serve the Student of the Future

Introduction

What types of programs and services will students of the next decade want and need when they enroll at our colleges? What skills will they bring? What can be done by colleges now to meet the challenges of tomorrow's student body?

These and many other questions are being asked everyday by California community college leaders as the new millennium nears and as the rapidly turning world inexorably brings important changes to the doorsteps of the California community colleges.

To assist community college leaders to look ahead and prepare for the future, the Community College League's Commission on the Future has published this planning resource report.

The report highlights the findings of the Commission's June, 1995 seminar, and the subsequent "Forums on the Future" held at ten college campuses and at the League's Annual Convention in November 1995. Nearly 600 California community college trustees, faculty, administrators, staff and students participated in the process that led to this report.

Each meeting addressed the question: What skills and needs will students bring to our community colleges in the next five to fifteen years and how can our colleges respond in the best interest of students? The report summarizes the findings of community college trustees, faculty, administrators, students and classified staff that participated in these discussions. Each section is divided into "Findings and Conclusions" and "Recommendations and Suggestions."

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The California community college leaders, faculty, staff and students that participated in the discussions that led to the development of this report identified numerous issues and challenges ahead for the system and its 71 districts. In summary, those included:

- The future will bring increased student diversity in ethnicity and greater differences in academic skills between the "haves" and the "have nots." Colleges must prepare now to respond to cultural diversity, changing values and a widening spectrum of student learning skills.
- Student enrollment patterns will continue to change. The students of tomorrow will be less committed to higher education and more involved in supporting their families. Colleges will need to adjust programs to meet these students' needs.
- Technology will have a dramatic and somewhat unknown impact on how we teach and how students learn. The role of faculty in the classroom will, as a result, be dramatically altered in the early 21st Century.

- As a result of all of the above, colleges should begin to devote more resources to staff development, including upgrading faculty's technology competencies and the entire staff's multi-cultural sensitivities.
- The cost of education will increase while state and federal support decreases. Colleges must respond with increased efforts to promote partnerships in the community with the goal of providing support for student financial aid and for important capital outlay projects.

Districts Urged to Hold Forums, Use Report

The Commission encourages districts to use this report to conduct district-wide forums on the future and as a planning resource for individuals and small groups. (See Appendix B.)

Student Enrollment Patterns in the Future

Findings and Conclusions

1. Over the past three decades, California community colleges have seen a dramatic change in the level of academic commitment of typical students. Their increasing commitment to jobs, family and non-academic issues has reduced their ability to commit the time and effort necessary to be successful in college.

2. It is anticipated by many college officials and staff that the academic commitment of the typical student will continue to take a back seat to their off-campus responsibilities and interests.

3. Campuses must realize they have become "in and out" institutions and acknowledge the transitory nature of the student body. Though the colleges may see periodic increases in transfer students, the expectation is the system will continue to serve an ever increasing number of independent students who may need to continually start and stop their educational careers and who will increasingly wish to tailor their program for their individual needs.

4. The colleges will continue to enroll large numbers of part-timers. Why? Less financial aid, higher costs of education, older, returning students, less parental support and more demands on time and finances.

5. Today, colleges tend to set class schedules to meet college needs and not for students, the majority of whom are living on the edge juggling jobs, marriages, parenting and school.

6. The new reality of student enrollment patterns may require colleges to reconsider the degree as the primary success indicator. More important may be the student's intent and necessary outcomes, such as certification or immediate job training.

7. Market forces will increasingly impinge upon the community colleges. There will be increased competition from private education enterprises, including small proprietary colleges and institutes as well as training centers funded by major national and international corporations.

8. Private entrepreneurs often focus on moving learners through their programs more rapidly, providing excellent student services and job placement, innovative class scheduling options and minimal liberal arts instruction.

9. Advances in telecommunications technology will produce patterns of learning and attendance that we aren't even aware of today, although it is clear that high tech and high touch systems will be in demand in the future.

Recommendations and Suggestions

- Given that most community college students are adults with family and job responsibilities, and that economic and job market changes continue to accelerate, colleges should plan to meet re-training demands with a more flexible learner-oriented system of program scheduling.
- Colleges should increase the flexibility of scheduling to not only accommodate the older, independent learner with many outside commitments, but to better accommodate employers/businesses.
- Colleges should develop flexible learning contracts which address the student as one who is involved in intermittent continuous learning. The contract may define a series of courses meeting the student's specific needs which the college then provides in a tailored length of time. The student should be able to periodically and easily re-enroll as other specific needs or goals are identified throughout his or her life.
- Colleges need to develop systems that promote smooth transition and accurate record keeping for students who move in and out of the system throughout their lifetimes.
- In response to the "in and out" nature of student enrollment, colleges should develop more certification programs for specific job/career needs.
- Colleges should be prepared to export more of their programs and services. In addition to providing off-site programs, colleges need to consider developing the on-going exportation of specific student services including registering, counseling, selling of books and materials, etc.
- Colleges should study carefully and learn from the new educational entrepreneurs such as proprietary colleges and institutes, Phoenix University, Mind Extension University, Microsoft and IBM.
- Colleges should experiment with different scheduling modes to respond to changing student needs and market place competition from private institutions.

Student Demographics of the Future

Findings and Conclusions

1. The system is anticipating total enrollment will grow over the next 15 years - possibly as much as 30 percent. There will, of course, be regional variance in terms of student demographics.
2. However, community college educators around the state are anticipating enrolling:
    - Increasing percentages of women;
    - Increasing numbers of students from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including more ESL students;
    - More immigrants and their children.
3. Enrollment increases in both full-time and part-time students will be fueled by an increase in the number of high school graduates, increased demands for retraining and technical skills, programs such as "school to work," and continuing increases in fees at the University of California and California State University.
4. Hispanic and Asian students will continue to be the fastest growing segments of the community college student body.
5. Students attending during the day will continue to be younger than students enrolled at night.
6. Enrollment growth will have a significant impact on facilities, equipment and staffing needs.

Recommendations and Suggestions

- To successfully serve the student of the future, community colleges will need to offer instructional delivery and teaching methods responsive to students with diversified academic preparation and language skills, values and educational goals.
- To accommodate these new populations, colleges should anticipate a greater need for remedial courses, additional levels for academic entry, and fundamental training in self discipline skills and interpersonal and intercultural relationship skills.
- It will also be necessary for colleges to become more flexible in their programming and scheduling and innovative in how they provide and deliver student services.
- Teachers should be bilingual and trained in issues related to other cultures. Colleges should encourage faculty and staff to let cultural diversity improve and enrich the curriculum.

Educational Preparedness of Students

Findings and Conclusions

1. Community colleges should anticipate a "mixed bag" in terms of the educational preparedness of students in the future. At one and the same time, colleges can expect to enroll increasing number of better prepared, younger students and growing numbers of students who will require remediation to upgrade their educational skills.
2. Why better prepared students? The increasing fee differential between community colleges and the California State University and University of California may result in higher numbers of CSU- and UC-qualified students.
3. At the same time, K-12 districts are dealing with increasing numbers of students with learning disabilities, ESL needs and other remediation issues. Many in the community colleges anticipate a continuing stream of students lacking in basic skills in English, writing and math.
4. Students will: Have advanced technology skills and experience with curriculum that is interdisciplinary and life relevant and more experience as independent learners.
5. Students won't: Have collegiate-level verbal skills, long attention spans, and preparation in fine arts, humanities and reading.
6. A significant number of college faculty, administrators and staff believe emotional and social problems will continue to affect the educational preparedness of students and that this leads to a lack of preparedness for the culture of the classroom.
7. Students will be more bilingual but less able to express themselves verbally or in writing and will be deficient in critical thinking skills.
8. The technology skills of students in the future will range from the very low end to the high end of proficiency. Generally, however, students will be more technology-oriented than the faculty teaching them.
9. Colleges will be working with more self-directed learners, as well as more people involved in high technology-oriented team learning.

Recommendations and Suggestions

- Community colleges should become better attuned to what is going on with K-12 curriculum, standards, and remediation approaches. Community college faculty and counselors should work more closely with high school faculty to understand the issues and challenges facing high schools.
- Colleges should continue to strengthen programs that deal with differences of student preparedness and learning styles, including assessment, staff development, and remediation. Teaching and counseling faculty should collaborate more closely.

- Colleges need to encourage faculty to teach to different learning styles, be more flexible, and broaden their creative skills to reach an increasingly diverse student body.
- Colleges should develop staff development programs that prepare all staff on issues related to the cultural and skill diversity of the student population.
- Colleges should promote Tech Prep programs as a strategy for linking academic classes with a vocational career.
- Technology will allow faculty to better serve both self-directed learners and students involved in technology-oriented team learning. Colleges must prepare and support faculty in dealing with these diverse learning styles.
- California community colleges should continue working together to improve the collection and analysis of data related to student demographics, the educational preparedness of current and future students and to factors which contribute to student success.

Curriculum Demands in the Future

Findings and Conclusions

1. Given expected future student demographics, California community colleges must be prepared to ready students for transfer to four-year universities and for the work place as well as offer effective basic skills programs and ESL.
2. In addition, colleges should be prepared to serve continuing numbers of older students with specific focus and narrowly defined education goals. Colleges will need to accommodate these goal-oriented students who may wish to come into the institution and leave it within their own time frames as opposed to those mandated by the college.
3. Education in the future will be more learner-driven, not teacher-driven.
4. Students in the future must learn to feel comfortable with continuous retraining and job/career flexibility.
5. Citizens will live multi-career lives and enroll in their local community college two or more times.
6. A major curriculum demand will be to prepare students to hunt, gather, learn and manufacture information.
7. Students are continually bombarded with technological stimulation. The curriculum will need to address the use of technology as an aide to learning. Students will expect educational stimulation beyond the traditional lecture format.
8. The curriculum of the future will require increased emphasis on communication careers, social services such as counselors and social workers, business services, bio-technology, medical, environmental education, multi-media entertainment information and technology, critical thinking and writing skills.
9. Distance education will offer colleges the flexibility to respond to a variety of student education needs.
10. Community college districts should be prepared to serve students without adequate state support.
11. Community colleges should anticipate students in the future will increasingly seek self-packaged curriculum instead of following the traditional pre-packaged degree/certificate curriculum.

Recommendations and Suggestions

- Colleges should be prepared to explore alternative ways of packaging courses from the traditional degree and certificate.

- Colleges must develop technologies and strategies to deliver learning on demand, particularly for independent and distant learners (including work-based sites).
- Some community college leaders believe the curriculum will need to be adapted to distance learning technology and to the technical advances of both students and the institution.
- Faculty will need ongoing training in advanced technology.
- Colleges should also offer students increased options for on-campus curriculum, including more short-term classes and open-entry/open-exit programs.
- Colleges may need to develop themselves into certification centers in addition to their transfer and vocational education functions. Colleges should consider providing validation of life experiences, and testing for marketable skills and licenses, irrespective of whether the individual is or has been enrolled in the college's program.
- Colleges should encourage instructor retraining to meet shifting curriculum demands.
- Colleges should form regional organizations to investigate regionalization of certain high cost programs.
- Colleges will, for survival purposes, need to reconfigure their programs, support systems and methods of doing business without new and significantly increased State resources.

Teaching and Learning Styles in the Future

Findings and Conclusions

1. It is expected students will bring to the community colleges increasingly diverse education and skill proficiencies and a multitude of learning styles and, therefore, increase the need for better and earlier assessment of individual student learning styles and skills.
2. Community college programs will need to be more learning centered than teaching centered. The shift in focus will be toward better understanding of the learning needs of students and how to develop learning communities.
3. Students will increasingly be "visual learners," preferring to see and hear graphic presentations rather than listen to lectures.
4. Some community college faculty feel today's teachers are ill prepared to deal with the variety of learning styles that will be in the 21st Century classroom.
5. Increased use of technology will bring new psycho-social trends that could result in students possessing minimal interactive skills due to long hours at computer terminals.
6. Because of job trends that put emphasis (including financial rewards) on ever-changing computer, technical and critical thinking skills, colleges will need to teach students how to learn.
7. Large group instruction lends itself to the lecture format, which is better suited for the more "traditional" student. Remedial students, however, need to be led step-by-step through the learning process.
8. New delivery systems and an expected de-emphasis on lecture formats will require additional training and staff development as well as technical support for teaching faculty.
9. Faculty role may expand to include assessment, coaching and advising skills, which may lead to emphasizing the faculty/facilitator role within learning communities.
10. Technology will influence how students "attend" college. The Internet, for example, will increasingly become a source of information as well as part of the instructional delivery system. Dynamic changes in the television, telephone and wireless broadcasting industries will also have major impacts on the transmission of information and instruction.

Recommendations and Suggestions

- Colleges should respond to students' diverse education and skill proficiencies and learning styles by providing better and earlier assessment of individual student learning styles and skills.

- Community colleges will need to train their faculty in multiple teaching styles and formats. Diverse learning styles and patterns will require multiple presentation skills.
- Colleges need to be prepared for students who will be demanding more interactive instruction.
- Discussions need to take place regarding the use of technology in the classroom, including how technology will supplement lecture/laboratory learning.
- Faculty should conduct campus-wide assessments and inventories of their courses to determine how, why, where, and when computers, multi-media, and teleconferencing are appropriate as instructional aids.
- Colleges need to provide innovative staff development programs to assist faculty in integrating technology in the classroom. Colleges should provide faculty with access to electronic information in order to augment their course presentations, including developing electronic resource centers.
- A commitment to staff development must be made by every college, including internships for faculty with business and industry. All campus staff must be committed to seeking and obtaining new skills and knowledge. These new skills must be acquired, however, without taking time and energy away from current students.
- Colleges should change their academic calendar - perhaps year-round tri-semesters - in order to offer greater curriculum flexibility. Administrators and faculty should offer more short-term courses and distance education, and utilize innovative technologies such as video conferencing.
- Colleges should act aggressively to build partnerships with business in order to enhance the curriculum, promote learning and encourage donations or sharing of up-to-date instructional equipment.
- Support systems for distance learning need to be thoroughly developed. More research and resources should go toward developing strategic plans for counseling, advising, and other student services required by students enrolled in distance learning.
- As curriculum demands and teaching and learning styles change, colleges should work to ensure that campuses maintain and encourage student contact that is supportive, personal and caring.

Student Financial Resources in the Future

Findings and Conclusions

1. The cost of living is continuing to rise while the state and federal governments are providing less support to public higher education. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume expenses for colleges will continue to increase.
2. The California community college student body will continue to reflect the wide diversity of household incomes in the state.
3. Older students will continue to be financially responsible for their education and younger students will be assuming a greater share of their educational costs.
4. Financial aid is in danger as more money from the state and federal budget is going into other areas. It is anticipated that state and federal governments will be taking a smaller and smaller role in helping to finance student aid.
5. As the general population ages and fewer people have children in college, taxpayers will be less likely to support public education. Some believe that community colleges will continue to garner strong support from voters because millions of voters have attended or are attending community colleges.
6. It is possible government funding to public higher education will, in the future, be tied more to student outcomes than to FTES.

Recommendations and Suggestions

- Colleges should examine and change curriculum and class schedules to minimize the cost of receiving a college education.
- The California community colleges, as a system and as individual districts and campuses, should place major emphasis on establishing partnerships with foundations, private donors, business and industry in order to develop non-governmental resources to support student financial aid.

Appendix A

List of Commission Members

Special thanks to the following for making publication of this report possible: Brice Harris, Curt Groninga, Dianne Sharples, Carole Bogue-Feinour, Ling Song, the members of the Commission on the Future and the colleges listed below that conducted ***Forums on the Future***.

Brice Harris, Chair, Fresno City College
Ted Boehler, Coastline Community College
Carole Bogue-Feinour, Cañada College
Robert Breuer, Las Positas College
Tom Bruce, Sacramento City College
Anthony Bugarin, San Joaquin Delta
Lynn Francis Bundy, San Diego CCD
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Stephan Cragg, Shasta College
Curt Groninga, Santa Rosa JC
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Jon Alan Kangas, San Jose-Evergreen CCD
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Richard Kleeberg, Solano College
Robert Lombardi, Saddleback CCD
Wilma McCleod, Modesto Junior College
Maria Nieto Senour, San Diego CCD
Marge Rivas, Butte College
Thomas Roe, Ventura College
Patrick Scott, El Camino College
Dianne Sharples, College of the Sequoias
Ling Song, College of Marin
Lise Telson, Palomar College
Scott Thomason, Kings River College
Darwin Thorpe, Compton College
Tom Travis, Napa Valley College
David Viar, Community College League
Ray Giles, Community College League

Colleges which conducted campus ***Forums on the Future*** or submitted information on campus discussions:

Allan Hancock College
Cañada College
College of the Sequoias
Cypress College
Fresno City College
Long Beach City College
MiraCosta College
Modesto Junior College
Saddleback Community College District
Shasta College

Campus Forums on the Future

Suggested Topics for Group Discussion

1. Student Demographics

- Describe the student population most likely to be attending your community college in 2005.
- What challenges will this population bring to your college in terms of programs and services?
- What should our colleges and system be doing now to prepare for this future?

2. Educational Preparedness

- Describe the educational preparedness of students most likely to be attending your community college in 2005.
- What challenges will this bring to your college in terms of programs and services?
- What should our colleges and system be doing now to prepare for this future?

3. Curriculum Demands

- Describe the curriculum demands your community college will most likely face in 2005.
- What challenges will these demands bring to your college in terms of programs and services?
- What should our colleges and system be doing now to prepare for the future?

4. Teaching and Learning Styles

- Describe the teaching and learning styles of students most likely to be attending your community colleges in 2005.
- What challenges will these styles bring to the college in terms of programs and services?
- What should our colleges and system be doing now to prepare for the future?

5. Student Enrollment Patterns

- Describe probable enrollment patterns of students most likely to be attending your community colleges in 2005.
- What challenges will these enrollment patterns bring to the college in terms of programs and services?
- What should our colleges and system be doing now to prepare for the future?

6. Student Financial Resources

- Describe the financial resources of students most likely to be attending your community college in 2005.
- What challenges will these students bring to the college in terms of programs and services?
- What should our colleges and system be doing now to prepare for the future?

Briefing from Meeting of the Commission on the Future

Hodgkinson's Crystal Ball

At its annual meeting in June, 1995, the Commission on the Future received a special briefing from Dr. Harold Hodgkinson, a noted demographer working in the field of educational research. He reviewed with the Commission on the Future some key demographic trends and information concerning future community college students.

1. During the decade from 1980 to 1990, the number of U.S. school age white children declined by four million. African-American school age children declined by 250,000. School age Hispanic and Asian children increased by 1,250,000 and 600,000, respectively.
2. White fertility rates have fallen below the replacement rate of 2.1 except for white Mormons. The fertility rate for African-Americans is 2.5, for Asians 2.3 and for Hispanics 2.7 per female.
3. Neighborhoods are more likely to be segregated by income than by age. One quarter of African-American households have higher incomes than the average income for whites (1992).
4. During the 1980s, immigration was responsible for one-half of the Hispanic growth and three-fourths of the Asian population growth.
5. More people are going back to school throughout their lifetime because there is more discretionary income available.
6. California students will increasingly become more diverse ethnically and poorer.
7. The number of upper middle class white students with college educated parents will decline.
8. Percent of 1995 high school graduates were ethnic minorities.
9. The Carnegie Institute predicted in 1990 that by 2000, 70 percent of jobs in America will not require a college education.

The Freshman Class of 2010

The 18 years olds of 2010 were born in 1992, Hodgkinson reminded Commission members. Twenty-three percent were born into poverty. One quarter were born to unmarried mothers (the largest number being white) and two-thirds were born to teenagers. Twenty-five percent will drop out of high school and not attend college. Whites will make up 43 percent of the student population.

View from the K-12 Classroom

At that same Commission on the Future meeting, a panel of elementary and secondary teachers and administrators from Richmond in Contra Costa County discussed the educational and behavioral challenges they face with students, many of whom will eventually attend community college.

The Richmond district contains 52 schools and is 24 percent white, 40 percent African-American and 35 percent Hispanic. The students speak 60 languages.

Changes in the family structure have significantly affected the teacher's role, the panelists reported. Because of custody problems, an increase in single-parents, television, technology, etc., there exists a huge discrepancy in young students' experiences, security and love. The teacher has become a teacher/counselor/facilitator. Teachers are trying to provide students with a variety of experiences which they may or may not otherwise receive at home. Half of the children come to school prepared to learn, the other half are not and are frequently beset with problems at home.

Gangs often become surrogate familial support groups. A chronic problem is keeping students enrolled until they succeed vs. moving them through the system and then not succeeding later on. One teacher said, "...if we haven't reached them by the third grade, we have lost them."

Leadership activities and increased levels of responsibility seem to help motivate students, the panelists say. The school encourages cross-age tutoring (helping younger students learn) and service to the school and community. Recognition and nurturing experiences impact K-12 students in the most positive terms, they reported.

The panelists suggested more interaction between K-12 and community colleges to improve understanding of student preparation issues. They called for consistent, on-going articulation between K-12 and community colleges. And they would like more feedback from the college faculty on the successes and failures of their former students.

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